16. The recombinant expression and cloning vector according to Claim 15, comprising a *Hind*III-*Pst*I DNA fragment constituted uniquely of DNA derived from the *aizawai* 7-29 strain.

17. A modified bacterial strain comprising a nucleotide sequence coding for at least part of the N-terminal region of a polypeptide specifically toxic toward larvae of Lepidoptera of the family Noctuidae.

18. The bacterial strain according to Claim 17, comprising at least one recombinant vector according to Claim 15 or 16.

21. A process for obtaining a nucleotide sequence coding for at least a part of the N-terminal region of a polypeptide toxic specifically toward Lepidoptera of the family Noctuidae comprising the following steps:

(a) carrying out a hybridization between a sequence of nucleotides from a strain of *B. thuringiensis* active against *S. litteralis*, and one or more sequences of nucleotides utilized as hybridization probes derived from

(i) the 5' part of a restriction fragment of a gene for the δ-endotoxin of *B. thuringiensis* that codes for the N-terminal part of a polypeptide toxic toward Lepidoptera, or

(ii) the 3' part of a restriction fragment of a gene for the δ-endotoxin of *B. thuringiensis* coding for the COOH part of a polypeptide toxic toward Lepidoptera,

(b) isolating the fragment,

(c) cloning the fragment in a vector, followed by its purification.

22. The process according to Claim 21, wherein the hybridization probes utilized are obtained from a gene for a δ-endotoxin derived from a *aizawai* 7-29 strain

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coding for a protein of 130 kDa active against *P. brassicae* and inactive toward *S. littoralis*.

23. The process according to Claim 21 or 22, wherein the fragment recombined with the vector in the cloning step is elaborated from at least one sequence of nucleotides derived from at least one recombinant vector containing a sequence of nucleotides from at least one strain of *B. thuringiensis*.

24. The process according to Claim 23, wherein the fragment recombined with the vector in the cloning step is elaborated from several sequences of nucleotides from at least 2 different strains of *B. thuringiensis* possessing the same restriction maps and containing all or part of the sequences of nucleotides capable of coding for a polypeptide active toward *S. littoralis*.

25. The process according to Claim 23, wherein the fragment recombined with the vector in the cloning step is elaborated from a *Hind*III-*Pst*I restriction fragment derived from the *aizawai* 7-29 strain.

26. The process according to Claim 24, wherein the fragment recombined with the vector in the cloning step is elaborated from a *Hind*III-*Hinc*II restriction fragment derived from the *entomocidus* 6-01 strain and from a *Hind*III-*Pst*I restriction fragment derived from the *aizawai* 7-29 strain.

27. The process according to Claim 22, wherein the fragment recombined according to Claim 25 is carried by a plasmid pHTA6 and the restriction fragments recombined according to Claim 26, *Hind*III-*Hinc*II and *Hind*III-*Hinc*II are carried by the respective recombinant plasmids pHTE6 and pHTA6, said plasmids pHTE6 and pHTA6 being isolated with the aid of a probe constituted by a *Pvu*II fragment of 2 kb of the

B2 CONT.

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plasmid pBT15-88 corresponding to the internal part of a gene for the chromosomal crystal of the *Berliner* 1715 strain, from transforming clones containing nucleotide sequences derived from *B. thuringiensis* strains active toward larvae of Lepidoptera.

29. A process for producing a polypeptide toxic towards Lepidoptera comprising the steps of:

(a) expressing the polypeptide in a microorganism capable of expressing recombinant vectors according to any one of claims 15, 16, 37, or 38; and

(b) collecting the expressed polypeptide.

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30. The process according to Claim 29, wherein the recombinant vectors are introduced into microorganisms living in the environment or in association with plants.

31. The process according to Claim 29 or 30, wherein the recombinant vectors are introduced into microorganisms in combination with different δ-endotoxin genes.

37. A recombinant expression and cloning vector according to Claim 15, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of hybridizing with a gene that expresses a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or larvicidal fragments thereof.

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38. A recombinant expression and cloning vector according to Claim 15, wherein the encoded polypeptide is capable of forming an immunological complex with antibodies directed against a polypeptide having the animo acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or larvicidal fragments thereof.

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